



(U//FOUO) Coming Soon to GCHQ Reports: Source Descriptors

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Reporting Policy and Guidance (S12P1)
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"Intelligence Source Descriptors" to appear on GCHQ reports, starting soon (C)

(C) As a result of the British Government's inquiry on weapons of mass destruction, also known as the Butler Commission Report, the British Government has mandated the use of "Intelligence Source Descriptors" on all intelligence reports. Consequently, GCHQ will soon begin using these descriptors on all their SIGINT reports. Because these reports will be forwarded to our U.S. customers with the descriptors, we wanted you to have as much background as possible to prepare for any questions you might get.

(U) The descriptors include three categories -- access, identity, and reliability -- and will be used by customers to gauge the accuracy and usefulness of the information. Reports will also include a lexicon to help the reader understand the components of the descriptors. An example and a draft lexicon appear below.

(S) At this time, GCHQ is the only SIGINT producer to add this feature to its reporting. This practice will be incorporated slowly into all the reporting lines at GCHQ. For the time being, only the Iran target area will be involved. NSA and the other SIGINT partners are reviewing GCHQ's initiative to determine if this approach would be adaptable to our respective reporting. We will keep you informed of any updates to this initiative.

Descriptor Format:

The indicator will be placed below the key points section of the report and will take the following form:

	Source:	Access	Identity	Reliability
(example)	Source:	Direct	Admiral A to Captain B	Uncertain

Draft Lexicon:

A SIGINT source description comprises three elements:

1. **Access** - GCHQ's judgement on the nature of the source's access to the intelligence contained in the report. A choice of two phrases:
 - **Indirect:** the SIGINT source is reporting information obtained from another source who has access to those with direct knowledge.
 - **Direct:** the SIGINT source has direct knowledge of the intelligence fact reported or appears to be in direct contact with those personally involved or knowledgeable.
2. **Identity** - Identification of the SIGINT source by name or role (where known).
3. **Reliability** - GCHQ's comment on the SIGINT source's previous reporting record. A choice of three phrases:
 - **Unknown:** previously unreported source, no reason to question accuracy
 - **Reliable:** established reporting record judged to be accurate

- **Uncertain:** limited reporting record and/or some uncertainty as to the reliability of the source or sources

(C) There are no plans at present to use a like program on NSA reports; however, when readdressing GCHQ reports, analysts are not to remove or alter the source descriptor in any way.

(U) Please send any comments/feedback on this initiative to DL RPG.



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